

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A communications method comprising:
establishing~~enabling~~ a text instant messaging communication session between a sender and ~~at least one~~ a recipient through an instant messaging host; and
facilitating a text instant message to be sent from the sender to the recipient during the session;
enabling presentation of a first text instant messaging interface to the recipient in which the text instant message is displayed to the recipient; and
enabling manipulation by the recipient of the first text instant messaging interface to invoke~~enabling~~ voice communication between the sender and the recipient through the instant messaging host.
2. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1 further comprising receiving and authenticating the~~a~~ text instant message from the sender at the instant messaging host.
3. (Previously presented) The method of claim 2 wherein authenticating the text instant message comprises identifying a screen name associated with at least one of the sender and the recipient.
4. (Currently amended) The method of claim 2 wherein authenticating the ~~text~~test-instant message comprises identifying an IP address associated with at least one of the sender and the recipient.

5. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1 further comprising determining voice communication capabilities of the recipient at the instant messaging host.

6. (Currently amended) The method of claim 5 wherein determining voice communication capabilities comprises identifying hardware associated with the recipient.

7. (Currently amended) The method of claim 5 wherein determining voice communication capabilities comprises identifying software associated with the recipient.

8. (Currently amended) The method of claim 5 further comprising reporting the voice communication capabilities of the recipient to the sender.

9. (Currently amended) The method of claim 8 further comprising presenting a second text instant messaging interface to the sender that varies ~~wherein the sender displays a user interface~~ according to the capabilities of the recipient.

10. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1 further comprising receiving, at the instant messaging host, a request to establish voice communication.

11. (Previously presented) The method of claim 10 wherein the request is from the sender.

12. (Previously presented) The method of claim 10 wherein the request is from the recipient.

13. (Previously presented) The method of claim 10 further comprising authenticating the request.

14. (Previously presented) The method of claim 11 wherein authenticating the request comprises identifying a screen name associated with at least one of the sender and the recipient.

15. (Previously presented) The method of claim 11 wherein authenticating the request comprises identifying an IP address associated with at least one of the sender and the recipient.

16. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein enabling voice communication comprises establishing a generic signaling interface channel, a control channel, and an audio channel between the sender and the recipient.

17. (Previously presented) The method of claim 16 further comprising attempting a mode UDP test on the audio channel.

18. (Previously presented) The method of claim 16 wherein the control channel comprises a TCP/IP socket.

19. (Previously presented) The method of claim 16 wherein the audio channel comprises a UDP channel.

20. (Previously presented) The method of claim 16 wherein the audio channel comprises a TCP channel.

21. (Currently amended) A communications apparatus comprising an instant messaging host configured to:

~~establish~~enable a text instant messaging communication session between a sender and ~~at least one~~a recipient; and

facilitate a text instant message to be sent from the sender to the recipient during the session;

enable presentation of a first text instant messaging interface to the recipient in which the text instant message is displayed to the recipient; and

enable manipulation by the recipient of the first text instant messaging interface to invoke voice communication between the sender and the recipient.

22. (Currently amended) A computer program, stored on a computer readable medium, comprising instructions for:

establishing a text enabling instant messaging communication session between a sender and at least one recipient through an instant messaging host; and

facilitating a text instant message to be sent from the sender to the recipient during the session;

enabling presentation of a first text instant messaging interface to the recipient in which the text instant message is displayed to the recipient; and

enabling manipulation by the recipient of the first text instant messaging interface to invoke enabling voice communication between the sender and the recipient through the instant messaging host.

23. (Previously presented) The computer program of claim 22 wherein the computer readable medium is a disc.

24. (Previously presented) The computer program of claim 22 wherein the computer readable medium is a client device.

25. (Previously presented) The computer program of claim 22 wherein the computer readable medium is a host device.

26. (Previously presented) The computer program of claim 22 wherein the computer readable medium is a propagated signal.

27. (New) A communications method comprising:
enabling a sender to send a text instant message to a recipient;
determining the availability of the sender to participate in voice communication with the recipient; and
enabling the recipient to perceive the availability of the sender to participate in voice communication with the recipient in response to delivery of the text instant message.

28. (New) The method of claim 27 wherein determining the availability of the sender to participate in voice communications with the recipient comprises determining the voice communication capabilities of a computer system associated with the sender.

29. (New) The method of claim 27 wherein enabling the recipient to perceive the availability of the sender in response to delivery of the instant message comprises enabling the recipient perceive the availability of the sender after delivery of the instant message.

30. (New) The method of claim 29 wherein enabling the recipient to perceive the availability of the sender after delivery of the instant message comprises enabling the recipient to perceive the availability of the sender after receipt of the instant message by the recipient.

31. (New) The method of claim 27 wherein enabling the recipient to perceive the availability of the sender in response to delivery of the instant message comprises enabling presentation of a text instant messaging interface to the recipient in which the text instant message and the availability of the recipient are displayed to the recipient.

32. (New) The method of claim 27 wherein enabling the recipient to perceive the availability of the sender in response to delivery of the instant message comprises enabling the recipient perceive the availability of the sender conditioned on receipt of the instant message.

33. (New) The method of claim 27 further comprising enabling the recipient to request initiation of voice communication between the sender and the recipient conditioned on whether the recipient is determined to be available.

34. (New) The method of claim 33 wherein enabling the recipient to request initiation of voice communication between the sender and the recipient comprises enabling the recipient to request initiation of voice communications through manipulation of a text instant messaging interface in which the text instant message and the availability of the recipient are displayed to the recipient.

35. (New) The method of claim 33 further comprising enabling the recipient to accept the request to initiate voice communication.

36. (New) The method of claim 33 further comprising initiating voice communication between the sender and the recipient conditioned on the recipient accepting the request.

37. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein enabling manipulation of the first text instant messaging interface by the recipient to invoke voice communication comprises enabling manipulation by the recipient to invoke voice communication in response to delivery of the text instant message to the recipient.

38. (New) The apparatus of claim 21, wherein the instant messaging host is configured to enable manipulation of the first text instant messaging interface by the recipient to invoke

voice communication by enabling manipulation by the recipient to invoke voice communication in response to delivery of the text instant message to the recipient.

39. (New) The computer program of claim 22, wherein the instructions for enabling manipulation of the first text instant messaging interface by the recipient to invoke voice communication include instructions for enabling manipulation by the recipient to invoke voice communication in response to delivery of the text instant message to the recipient.